

# Press Release



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## ***Bird Count Results***

The 14th annual Christmas Bird Count was held December 14 near Icelandic State Park. This year's total count of 2,092 birds was composed of 37 different species, and was an increase from the 1,944 birds counted last year.

The most unique bird found in this year's count was a Clark's nutcracker, which was observed by many of the count's participants and was confirmed by birder Mike Jacobs. The nutcracker is common in the higher elevations of the Rockies and in other western states and is not usually found in North Dakota. Other unique species, based on the season and rarity, which were found include the red-tailed hawk, common grackle, red-bellied woodpecker and white-winged crossbill.

Participants in the count kept track of all the birds seen within a 15 mile radius from the northwest edge of Jay Wessels Game Management Area, south of Walhalla. This area includes Icelandic State Park and the towns of Olga and Walhalla and is similar to counts conducted in the 1950s by Ed Bry. Bry, a former game warden stationed in Walhalla, was also an editor for the North Dakota Outdoors magazine.

Mike Jacobs, Grand Forks, reported the results of the count to the National Audubon Society for inclusion in "American Birds." This bird count is one of about 1,600 conducted between December 14 and January 5.

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*Play in our backyard!*